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**LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR HEALEY PRESENTS AWARD TO MASSACHUSETTS
STATE PARK SUPERVISOR HONORED AS AMERICA'S
2006 RANGER OF THE YEAR**

BOSTON—Today, Lieutenant Governor Kerry Healey joined with officials from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and state legislators to honor Leslie “Les” Perry, Supervisor of Shawme-Crowell State Forest in Sandwich, for being named America’s 2006 Ranger of the Year by ReserveAmerica, the nation’s premiere campground reservation system.

Each year, ReserveAmerica presents one Gold Medal and five Silver Medal awards, with the Gold Medal Award going to America’s Ranger of the Year. Visitors to over 3,000 national and state parks campgrounds across the country vote for the Park Ranger who should be recognized, based on their dedication to preserving and protecting public lands, a courageous spirit and unwavering character; and being a knowledgeable and compassionate professional.

“Today, we proudly honor Les Perry for winning this national award,” said Lieutenant Governor Healey. “Besides this personal recognition, he has also brought honor to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and our state parks system. World-class employees like Les Perry are the cornerstone of a world-class park system.”

Environmental Affairs Secretary Stephen R. Pritchard said, “Les is a remarkable man and an outstanding park manager. It is a pleasure and an honor to have him serve as a national representative of our Massachusetts state parks and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. I can think of no better public face for DCR than Les Perry.”

“Through the America’s Ranger of the Year Award, ReserveAmerica has set out to honor the hardworking individuals who dedicate their careers to serving park visitors while preserving public lands for future generations,” said ReserveAmerica President Brendan Ross. “We want to salute the park professionals that manage campgrounds throughout the U.S., helping to make the camping trips for our millions of customers a safe, fun and memorable event.”

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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Mitt Romney
Governor

Kerry Healey
Lt. Governor

Stephen R. Pritchard, Secretary
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

Stephen H. Burrington, Commissioner
Department of Conservation & Recreation

Les attended the Stockbridge School of Agriculture and the University of Massachusetts in Amherst in the early 1970s, earning degrees in Park Management from both institutions. He began working in the Massachusetts park system 40 years ago. His first job was as a Fire Tower Operator in Falmouth in 1966. Before becoming Supervisor of Shawme-Crowell State Forest in 1982, he served as the Supervisor of Mt. Washington State Forest in the far southwestern corner of the Commonwealth and later managed Mt. Greylock State Reservation in the northern Berkshires. In 1995, he was selected to receive the Alan Hendry Award, presented annually by the Director of State Forests and Parks to the best Massachusetts State Forests and Parks Supervisor.

Les is an enthusiastic proponent of park partnerships. He has helped foster a very active Friends Group at Shawme-Crowell State Forest. Last year the Friends donated \$9,000 from fund-raising events they sponsored for a new pavilion at the park. These funds were matched by the EOEA Office of Public Private Partnership and the new pavilion was dedicated in ceremonies on Labor Day 2005.

“This is a great thing, not only for myself, but for the Commonwealth and for DCR,” said America’s 2006 Ranger of the Year Les Perry. “I’ll keep trying to do my best. We’re here to serve the customers, to aid and assist them, to provide them with a clean, healthy place to camp. I live the role and I love what I’m doing and where I’m doing it. This land is my heritage.”

Les Perry is a native Cape Codder and is a direct descendant of John Perry who arrived in Plymouth in 1632 and soon moved south to the Cape with his mother and siblings. Much of the land at Shawme-Crowell State Forest today was owned generations ago by members of his family. One of his cousins, Everett Wright, served as Supervisor of the same park many years ago

Les Perry’s Shawme-Crowell State Forest campground opens for the season on Patriot’s Day weekend, April 14-17.

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